IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

CRIMINAL APPEAL No. 700 of 1995

For Approval and Signature:

HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE KS JHAVERI

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1 Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgment ?

2 To be referred to the Reporter or not ?

3 Whether their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgment ?

4 Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the constitution of India, 1950 or any order made thereunder ?

5 Whether it is to be circulated to the civil judge ?

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STATE OF GUJARAT - Appellant(s)
Versus
PARBATSINH JUJARSING SOLANKI & 3 - Opponent(s)

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Appearance :
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR for Appellant(s) : 1,
MR HARIN P RAVAL for Opponent(s) : 1,

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CORAM : HONOURABLE MR.JUSTICE KS JHAVERI

Date : 26/10/2007

ORAL JUDGMENT

1.0 This appeal is directed against the judgment and order dated 21.04.1995 passed by the learned Judicial Magistrate, First Class, Dhanera in Criminal Case No. 234 of 1989 whereby, the respondents – accused persons were acquitted of the charges levelled against them.

2.0 The brief facts of the prosecution case are as under;

2.1 On 13.01.1989 on account of some dispute pertaining to crop harvesting, a quarrel took place between the respondents and the family members of the complainant. As a result thereof, a scuffle took place between them and in that process the respondents inflicted stick blows on the family members of the complainant.

2.2 A complaint with respect to the aforesaid offence was filed against the respondents before Dhanera Police Station. Investigation was carried out. At the end of investigation, charge-sheet was filed against the respondents and, ultimately, trial was conducted. In order to prove the guilt of the respondents, the prosecution has examined witnesses namely, Ranchhodbhai Chapabhai as PW – 1 at Exhibit – 27, Bhema Rana as PW – 2 at Exhibit – 37, Sitaben as PW – 3 at Exhibit – 47, Chothiben as PW – 4 at Exhibit – 48, Gulabsinh Savji as PW – 5 at Exhibit – 49, Mafatlal Dharmaji as PW – 6 at Exhibit – 53, Maganbhai Gulabbhai as PW – 7 at Exhibit – 55, Dr. Kailashsinh Gadhvi as PW – 8 at Exhibit – 57, Dr. Rekhaben as PW – 9 at Exhibit – 67, Dr. Srikant Chotalal as PW – 10 at Exhibit – 81 and Taga Gamna as PW – 11 at Exhibit – 87 and has also relied upon several documentary evidence. At the end of trial, the learned Magistrate acquitted the respondents of the charges levelled against them.

3.0 Heard learned counsel for the respective parties and perused the entire documents on record. The principles which would govern and regulate the hearing of appeal by this Court against an order of acquittal passed by the trial Court have been very succinctly explained by the Apex Court in a catena of decisions. This Court has the power to re-consider the whole issue involved in the appeal, re-appraise the evidence and come to its own conclusion and findings in place of the findings recorded by the trial Court, if the said findings are against the weight of the evidence on record or, in other words, perverse.

4.0 In a recent decision of the Apex Court in the case of ***State of Goa v. Sanjay Thakran & anr. reported in (2007) 3 S.C.C. 755***, the Court has reiterated the powers of this Court in such cases. In Para-16 of the said decision, the Court has observed as under ;

> "16. From the aforesaid decisions, it is apparent that while exercising the powers in appeal against the order of acquittal the Court of appeal would not ordinarily interfere with the order of acquittal unless the approach of the lower Court is vitiated by some manifest illegality and the conclusion arrived at would not be arrived at by any reasonable person and, therefore, the decision is to be characterized as perverse. Merely because two views are possible, the Court of appeal would not take the view which would upset the judgment delivered by the Court below. However, the appellate Court has a power to review the evidence if it is of the view that the conclusion arrived at by the Court below is perverse and the Court has committed a manifest error of law

> and ignored the material evidence on record. A duty is cast upon the appellate Court, in such circumstances, to re-appreciate the evidence to arrive to a just decision on the basis of material placed on record to find out whether any of the accused is connected with the commission of the crime he is charged with".
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> [*Emphasis supplied*]

5.0 Similar principle has been reiterated by the Hon'ble Apex Court in two recent decisions in the cases of ***State of Uttar Pradesh v. Ram Veer Singh & ors.*** reported in ***2007 A.I.R. S.C.W. 5553*** and in ***Girja Prasad (Dead) by L.Rs. v. State of M.P.*** reported in ***2007 A.I.R. S.C.W. 5589***. Thus, the powers which this Court may exercise against an order of acquittal are well settled.

6.0 From the evidence available on record, it transpires that there was no eye-witness to the alleged incident in question. Having gone through the entire oral evidence led by the prosecution witnesses, several contradictions come to the fore, which makes the case of the prosecution vulnerable. There is not an iota of evidence on record to show that the alleged incident in question was witnessed by any of the prosecution witness/s, including the complainant. Further more, the Investigating Officer has also not been examined before the Court below.

7.0 In above view of the matter, I am of the opinion that the trial Court was completely justified in acquitting the respondents of

the charges levelled against them. In my view, the findings recorded by the trial Court are absolutely just and proper and in recording the said findings, no illegality or infirmity has been committed by it. I am in complete agreement with the findings, ultimate conclusion and the resultant order of acquittal recorded by the trial Court and, hence, find no reasons to interfere with the same.

8.0 I am not discussing the evidence of each witness/s in detail in view of the observations made by the Apex Court in the case of ***State of Karnataka Vs. Hemareddy*** reported in ***A.I.R. 1981 S.C. 1417*** wherein it is held as under:

> "... This court has observed in Girija Nandini Devi V. Bigendra Nandini Chaudhary (1967)1 SCR 93: (AIR 1967 SC 1124) that it is not the duty of the appellate court when it agrees with the view of the trial court on the evidence to repeat the narration of the evidence or to reiterate the reasons given by the trial court expression of general agreement with the reasons given by the Court the decision of which is under appeal, will ordinarily suffice."

9.0 In the result, the appeal is dismissed. Office is directed to send the Records & Proceedings of the case, if lying with this Court, to the trial Court concerned forthwith.

[K. S. Jhaveri, J.]

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